

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-41 (canceled).

42 (previously presented). A process for sub-culturing a microorganism, the process comprising:

providing a first vessel containing a first body of solid growth supporting medium;
inoculating the growth medium at a first location with microorganism;
causing the microorganism to grow in said medium in said first vessel towards a second location;

providing a second vessel containing a second body of solid growth supporting medium;

arranging said first vessel and said second vessel such that medium in the first vessel and medium in the second vessel provide a continuum for growing microorganism; and

permitting said microorganism to grow from the body of medium in the first vessel into the body of medium in the second vessel through said second location,
wherein said microorganism is filamentous and said process maintains said microorganism in a genetically stable state over a prolonged period.

43 (previously presented). A process according to claim 42, comprising connecting said second vessel to said first vessel and permitting said microorganism to grow into said second body of medium while said vessels are connected together.

44 (previously presented). A process according to claim 42 comprising removing said first vessel from said second vessel after said microorganism has begun to grow in said second body of medium.

45 (previously presented). A process according to claim 42 comprising:
causing said microorganism to grow in said second body of medium towards a second location therein;
providing a third vessel containing a third body of growth supporting medium;
arranging said second vessel and said third vessel such that medium in the second vessel and medium in the third vessel provide a continuum for growing microorganism; and
permitting said microorganism to grow from said second body of medium into said third body of medium through said second location of said second vessel.

46 (previously presented). A process according to claim 45, wherein said first vessel is used as said third vessel.

47 (previously presented). A process according to claim 42 further comprising causing said microorganism to grow through substantially the entire volume of said solid growth supporting medium.

48 (previously presented). A process according to claim 42 wherein the same solid growth supporting medium is used in each vessel.

49-65 (canceled).

66 (previously presented). A process of sampling a microorganism for sub-culture, comprising growing a microorganism in accordance with claim 42 and sampling said microorganism by removing a cross-section of the solid growth supporting medium through which the microorganism has grown.

67 (previously presented). A process for sampling as claimed in claim 66 wherein the removing step comprises removing a vessel from an end-to-end series of vessels through which said microorganism has grown.

68 (previously presented). A process for sampling a microorganism for sub-culture comprising placing a sampling medium adjacent a said second location in accordance with the process of claim 42 for continuing growth of said microorganism thereon.

69 (previously presented). A process for manufacturing a metabolite comprising the steps of:

growing a microorganism in accordance with the process of claim 42;
extracting a sample of said microorganism;
subjecting said sample to conditions suitable for metabolism; and
extracting metabolite from said sample.

70 (previously presented). A process for preparing a pharmaceutical preparation including the step of isolating a metabolite produced in accordance with claim 69.

71 (canceled).